It's torn where there's beauty, it's torn where there's death

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by det395

Summary

Hannibal saves Will from Muskrat Farms and tucks him into bed. He begins to realize there's only so much he can fix.

Allegedly, Harry Houdini escaped from murderer's row in 1906. Stripped naked and without tools, it took him two minutes to break through the steel door and another 19 to go the extra mile and open the doors to seven convicted murderers and shuffle them around. Performative and cheap, Hannibal was not a huge fan of the old escape artist, but he had often considered how he would open the door if he ever got locked within his own new-century carceral facility.

It was mostly a thought experiment, though he was never one to deny his own fallibility. Miriam Lass herself, now free and having denied any news interviews about her time in Hannibal's basement out of the shame of her misplaced accusation, had humbled Hannibal enough. However, the possibility of imprisonment never felt quite so real until it was Will's sharp mind turned on him, so starkly determined to win his fights that he would repeatedly deny himself from Hannibal's presence free in the world.

Hannibal had no interest in magic tricks or stunts. He always knew his power to escape was in his mouth.

Alana Bloom wanted him to save Will Graham. Sentimental still, sharp suits and knee-breaking cane be damned. She never would entirely lose her incessant need to save those around her.

It was different from Will's urge to save people in that it was not a method to keep her own rocky psyche in balance as much as it was an attempt to keep the people around her close.

He could see it in the sudden alliance between her and Margot Verger, leaning toward each other in the comforting attachment of erotic reciprocation. He imagined that Margot entertained their relationship for how it would benefit her at the start, just as she had found her way into Will's bed, but she did have an adolescent-like craving to be cared for after so much alienation from her family. The sapphic ideal in red-lipped Alana would offer her a new kind of security, and Alana would savor the codependency so long as she could feel morally secure. Hannibal could only imagine the appeal of a Verger baby to need her too.

It was no matter to him anymore, as much as he could respect their respective determination. Alana wanted him to save Will and he didn't need to be told even once.

He pulled the rope off his wrist with his teeth and then cut through the remaining ties holding him. The bondage was meant to be degrading but Hannibal did not see insult in the dehumanizing practice when he was looking down from the top of the food chain. It was not a bother to be held tight and still when this freedom waited for him.

He stood and stretched out the top of his spine as he pulled the collar free. His neck was dotted with sweat and the barn air felt cool along the place the rope was. He inhaled the smells of farm grain, gun powder, and in the distance, an antiseptic that he associated with a clinical setting.

Cordell may have already begun his poor excuse for surgery, the aforementioned face transplant of Will's to Mason. An adolescent and Frankensteinian dream, as if it wouldn't

leave Mason's pucker rotting into his own eyes with the droop of Will's skin. A man of excessive confidence and hastily taught skills, doomed to leave everything he touched grotesque and unsightly, like the overabundance of oil left dotting the otherwise by-the-book meal he served earlier. Tasteless.

Even Will's face—and Hannibal admitted that it was a good face, an island he was itching to map a million times—would be made ugly on Mason. Like a diamond earring one's body fails to accept the beauty of, inflamed skin swallowing it whole.

It would be a shame if it were to happen, and Hannibal wasn't usually idealistic about physical features.

He pressed the dagger that Alana gave him into his thumb as he laid his eyes on his preferred weapon. He picked up the hammer used to secure his ropes and felt its weight.

Speaking of clowns, Hannibal wouldn't mind playing some 'whac-a-mole' at this carnival.

The guards went down like nothing, heartily paid and insufficiently vetted, all rescued foreign criminals too out of their depths and badly treated to have any kind of allegiance to Mason or motivation to really fight a threat they had. Undoubtedly Hannibal's moniker had spread through the staff, if the fear in their eyes was anything to go by. That or it was just the hammer swinging in his hands as he walked toward them.

Sated with the long-awaited use of his muscles again and the feeling of concave skulls beneath his hands, Hannibal stepped out into the night air, setting his sights on the room just across the courtyard with its lights still on.

He threw the hammer into a bush and stepped inside.

He snuck up on Cordell from behind and grasped his throat. He was strong like a bull and growled like something else, trying his hardest to buck Hannibal off of him.

Hannibal was thrown back into a stainless steel surgical tray that toppled with the crash of scalpels and forceps. He sent a sharp kick to Cordell's ankle to throw him off balance and readjusted his hand to cut off the blood supply to the man's meaty head. He called out a meek and strained "guards!" that no one in a 15-foot radius would be able to hear.

Slowly but surely, Cordell lost consciousness and slipped dead weight to the ground. Hannibal put his hand to his mouth to ensure he was still breathing.

Straightening up, Will's eyes turned frantically to the side and met Hannibal's gaze, but the rest of his body was seemingly immobile. It was a little unsettling to be cut off from his expressions and body language, always so particular and unique to Will without his best

efforts to deceive Hannibal. His eyes dilated at the sight of Hannibal and he could only guess what it meant.

Hannibal put one hand to the side of Will's cheekbone where a scalpel had cut, but not deep. Stinging surely, but the skin wasn't lifted yet, no mask pushed aside to show what was truly underneath the bounds of that dotted sharpie. His finger came back bloody and warm.

He removed the IV from Will's arm and read the vial set aside.

"My apologies, Will, but it would be most prudent to have you comfortable right where you are for now. I would advise against trying to struggle, as it would only increase the sense of panic, and you won't be mobile for a long while now. I just have a couple of things to attend to and then we will be on our way."

He swore he could detect Will's glower from only a slow blink and glance of his eyes.

Hannibal extracted 50 mg from the vial with a new needle and bent down to inject it into Cordell's arm just as he was beginning to stir. It was time to do his own surgery.

He rolled Cordell's operating table into Will's eyeshot. He hoped he would appreciate the show; being unable to move could be rather boring. Perhaps it would mean something if he averted his eyes to the ceiling, but each time Hannibal looked up, Will was decidedly rapt with damp eyes. Hannibal could only wonder what he was thinking, as he seemed to always be wondering these days.

He lifted Cordell's skin from his face with a careful hand and steady slices between the dermis and flesh below. There was a steady moaning sound emanating from his throat and he huffed piggishly onto his hand. Hannibal lifted his skin from the jaw and up his cheek and then sliced up under his lower eyelid to separate the skin at his water line. Cordell's eyes rolled upward as he passed out. Hannibal took a break to await for his consciousness to return.

As he set down his tools, Hannibal turned to the sound of heels entering the room and the subtle scent of salty tears mixed with the artificial, vinegar smell of makeup.

Mason promised to give something back to me. Something that he stole.

Hannibal afforded only a moment of sympathy, but more for the scar he knew sat on Margot's abdomen. He had perhaps been careless with her and it allowed Mason another moment of superiority.

Alana and Margot looked around the room with flinching eyes, Alana's lingering on Will to track the movement of his chest, and then she looked back to Hannibal.

“We need Mason’s sperm,” Alana said. Meant to be a question, judging by her aimless stance.

“That will be an easy task. I can help you, if you ask me.”

“Please, Doctor Lecter,” Margot said, her voice cracked and her eyes angry.

“A cattle prod should do the trick more efficiently than any of our hands, as I’m sure none of us want that. Please go retrieve one.”

They left him with one last weary expression, and Hannibal pulled Mason’s operating table into Will’s line of sight as he turned him on his side, pulled down his pants, and tucked up his knees.

He changed his gloves and located some lubricant and a small, empty vial by the time the women returned. He took the two-pronged electric rod and they watched him in nothing short of disgust. He spared a look up at Will, whose eyes were twitching more than before.

He applied the necessary lubricant and stood behind Mason’s pale behind as he inserted it past his rim, lax with unconsciousness, and tilted forward to press against his prostate. He positioned the small vial at the head of his urethra and turned on the electricity.

It took almost no time at all and limited pressure for Mason’s unconscious body to jerk and spew ejaculate out of his soft, twitching cock. Hannibal pressed the rod inside of him more insistently to coax out another squirt to fill the vial. With a quick sanitation of the outside, he presented it to Alana and Margot.

Margot grabbed the vial and held it loosely in her palm. Her whole life contained in one little bottle, as easy as that.

He began repositioning Mason’s body as he spoke. “Now we will return him to his wheelchair and you two can take him back to his room where he will be most comfortable upon waking. Since I have allowed you yours, I hope you will allow me my amusement of giving him the new face he always wanted.” He glanced at Alana. “Revenge for our friends feels sweet, does it not?”

Alana sighed and glanced at Will one more time. “Get him out safe, Hannibal.”

When one face was transferred to another and it was Alana and Margot’s turn to work things out, Hannibal returned to Will. Eyes flickered up to him then straight forward, up and back again.

He pulled him forward enough to wrap his own coat around Will, buttoning it up his bare chest and over his throat. He pulled him forward more until his body flopped against

Hannibal's shoulder so that he could twist him sideways and get his arms under his knees and back. He lifted Will into the air and began what he knew would be a long trek.

Blood dribbled down his leg from Jack's wound. Whether he had aggravated it with Will's added weight or beforehand, he did not know. He walked with an uneven gait, frustrated that he couldn't go faster. He felt unnervingly undefended with his arms full as he made it outside and began to trudge away from the mansion, until he heard the sound of bullets sing over his head.

He smiled toward the tree. He wasn't used to having support, but tonight he'd found it in a number of people. It helped him to keep his legs moving.

His lungs were burning in the cold air and the blood splattered across his face was streaking into his eyes with his sweat.

Will was not light, but his weight felt good in Hannibal's arms. To hold all of him and know his shape, even flopped down like a rag doll. It was strange to know he was aware as he existed so close to Hannibal without resisting. He must hate to be so vulnerable.

At the road, Chiyoh had a car waiting for them. Hannibal was relieved that he wouldn't need to steal one himself.

She opened the back and he pushed Will in as gracefully as he could so that he was laying on his side with his knees tucked up, a bit like Mason had been. He leaned over him to look at his face.

"Blink once for yes and twice for no. Are you comfortable right now?"

Will stared at the ceiling and blinked twice.

"Let's try that again. Would you like me to shift your position in the back of this vehicle?"

Will blinked twice and Hannibal closed the door on him.

When he sat in the driver's seat, he waited. Only then did Chiyoh crawl into the passenger's side.

He appraised her grown self for a moment, but he did not speak. They had never needed many words as kids, and Hannibal had few at that time anyway. They taught each other what they knew through actions.

She was recognizable as the young girl he once knew and objectively very youthful in appearance, but he could never miss those signs of the years gone by.

He pulled out and began to drive to Wolf Trap.

Hannibal arrived at Will's familiar farmhouse. It was no boat on the sea to welcome him home with only his headlights to guide the way.

He pulled Will off the backseat by his hips and then caught him in his arms. He hoisted him up and bounced him twice to get a good grip which made Will grunt, whether inadvertently or just to complain somehow. Hannibal stood up straight and kicked the car door closed. The soreness he felt in his body was welcome but not particularly easy to move through as he limped to the front door.

He placed Will down on his bed. The absence of dogs at his feet was noticeable as he made his way through the dark and turned on a few lamps to brighten up the place.

In the absence of his own things, he found some disinfectant in Will's bathroom that he could clean his cuts with. When he returned and loomed over Will—eyes twitching into contact then away, contact then away—to assess the damage, he considered ripping out and redoing the sloppy stitches on his forehead. Then again, scars offered memory that Hannibal appreciated. There were things to be learned. And perhaps one day it would be prudent to remember the relief he felt at being interrupted during their past night at the dinner table.

He cleaned the cuts dotting Will's face and collar, a dozen scabs and one sewn bullet wound courtesy of the woman who had slipped out of the car and disappeared somewhere into the night air.

"Are there other injuries I should attend to?" Hannibal asked.

Will blinked twice.

"To avoid choking, it would be best not to drink or eat until you have regained full mobility. Did Cordell give you a catheter?"

Hannibal's hand gravitated toward Will's fly to check for himself but then he hesitated. Will blinked once.

"I will leave that in to avoid a mess."

Hannibal considered his next course of action. He would be stripping Will down anyway to dress him in more comfortable clothes, so his hesitation was unnecessary. Nudity was insignificant without context and he had dressed Will before when he was incapacitated. It was only his attentive eyes on Hannibal that gave him pause. He wondered if Will's nudity was really so insignificant when he was so worried what he would see looking up at him.

He had looked at him before. As Will lay with his burning head on his pillow. As he cleaned him after stitching his bullet wound. There was something about Will that made Hannibal curious to see.

He found some adequate sleeping clothes from Will's drawers in his thickest sweatpants and warm flannel. The house was without heat and would be dangerously cold until Hannibal could find the pilot light for the furnace.

He avoided Will's eyes as he began stripping the fabric from his limp body, replacing each piece with clean clothes to maintain some semblance of modesty, as if he wasn't seeing each bit of Will's skin in its parts or brushing his wrists indulgently against his body or adjusting his catheter without warning. He was all too aware of the soft skin of his cock as he kept his movements outwardly clinical.

"You were given a paralytic, which blocks neuromuscular binding sites to prevent them from functioning, as you likely are aware of. Without knowing the dose given, it is difficult to predict how long it will take to wear off, but I anticipate no more than a few hours even with Cordell's heavy hand."

He noticed Will's hand twitching by his side.

"Side effects include muscle twitches, altered heartbeat and breathing, and some blood pressure changes, and I would not suspect you at risk of worse complications."

When he was fully bundled up, Hannibal tucked him under the covers.

"Is there anything more I can do for you?" Hannibal asked quietly.

Will blinked twice and kept his eyes stubbornly on the ceiling above. Hannibal craved that eye contact now. Any kind of connection was proving to be preferable to missing him.

He considered what he should say. An apology felt sour on his tongue and reassurances would be trite. His observations of the last few days would feel flat spoken into the air when Will couldn't respond.

There was nothing Will would accept right now, and that thought felt more hopeless than he cared to think about. Instead, he turned away silently and began diligently shutting off the lights.

He shut himself in the bathroom and stripped down his clothes to assess the various discolorations and wounds spattering his body. The burn on his back was most insistent, pulsing heat like the flickering of a coal burner. He sat in the bathtub bottom of the shower and let some cold water trickle over his back as he restitched the wound on his leg with a regular needle and thread he disinfected. Blood streamed down the off-color porcelain and around his body.

He cleaned and dressed himself with automatic movements but couldn't quite shake the hollowness he felt. The night was altogether amusing and triumphant with limited injury, if a little inconvenient. Only he was certain that he would be gone again by the next light.

There was something Hannibal was missing. At some point, things had gone off track.

Somewhere there was a leak, and it was rushing down in droves.

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